

REMARKS

Attached hereto is an Excess Claims Letter and fee for excess independent claims.

It is noted that, notwithstanding any claim amendments made herein, Applicant's intent is to encompass equivalents of all claim elements, even if amended herein or later during prosecution.

Claims 1-20 are all the claims presently pending in the application. New claims 12-20 are added. Claims 1-7, 10, and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over US Patent 6,456,714 to Shima et al., further in view of US Patent 6,496,862 Akatsu et al. Claims 8 and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Shima, further in view of US Patent 4,747,130 to Ho.

These rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the following discussion.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

As described in the specification and claimed, for example by claim 1, the present invention is directed to a network switching system, including a gateway, one or more extension nodes, and a serial bus interconnecting the gateway and the one or more extension nodes. Stream data transferred on a serial bus are exchanged through a gateway between an outside line and an extension node, or between a first extension node and a second extension node.

At least one of the extension nodes includes a control/memory unit for storing physical identifiers and telephone numbers of the gateway node and extension nodes and for controlling the network, an asynchronous interface, for selecting the extension node and controlling a switching timing, connected with the control/memory unit, a rate conversion unit for converting a data rate of the stream data in the network into that in the outside line, or for converting a data rate of stream data in the outside line into that of the network switching system, and an isochronous interface, for

transmitting and receiving the stream data, connected with the rate conversion unit.

In contrast, the telecommunications system taught in Shima has a single telephone number for the entire multimedia network 100 attached to the peripheral device 230.

An advantage of the present invention is that it provides a low cost method to incorporate a telephone system into the existing capability of the serial IEEE 1394 bus in the environment of a home entertainment system, including the feature that a plurality of nodes in the home entertainment system can each have a unique telephone number.

The present invention thereby provides the advantage of low cost switching equipment for telephone voice and or video, in addition to its customary deployment as a distribution system for interconnecting computers and computer peripheral devices such as printers or audio/video system interconnections, while simultaneously taking advantage of the capability for reducing the number of interconnect wires and providing good quality audio, along with a "plug and play" capability.

II. THE PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

The Examiner alleges that Shima, when combined with Akatsu, renders obvious claims 1-7, 10, and 11, and, when combined with Ho, renders obvious claims 8 and 9.

Applicant disagrees.

First, relative to the rejection for claims 1 and 7, the present invention incorporates a memory in the extension node terminal that stores the physical identifiers and telephone numbers of the gateway node and the extension nodes in the system.

Relative to the rejection for claims 5 and 6, the present invention incorporates a capability that each extension node potentially has its own unique telephone number. This feature that is not taught or suggested in Shima, Akatsu, or Ho.

In contrast, although Shima provides the capability for a telephone interface

with the multimedia network 100, this capability is for a single number for the entire network (e.g., see lines 5-9 of column 5), so that any multimedia device having a telephone interface incorporated therein can receive/originate telephone communications, using the single telephone number that identifies the entire multimedia network 100.

This concept of Shima is quite different from that of the present invention in which each extension node can be a separately-identified telephone node. The present invention thereby allows the various extension nodes to call each other, similar to an intercom system, in addition to placing and receiving telephone calls to and from telephones on the external telephone system, using the unique telephone number assigned to that extension node.

Hence, turning to the clear language of claim 1, there is no teaching or suggestion of: "...wherein at least one said extension node comprise: a control/memory unit for storing physical identifiers and telephone numbers of said gateway node and extension nodes and for controlling said network."

Independent claims 5, 6, and 7 have similar language to describe this concept of individual telephone numbers assigned to each extension node, rather than a multimedia network in its entirety.

Relative to the rejection currently of record for claims 8 and 9, this rejection ignores the following evaluation guideline of MPEP 2141.02: "*In determining the differences between the prior art and the claims, the question under 35 U.S.C. 103 is not whether the differences themselves would have been obvious, but whether the claimed invention as a whole would have been obvious.*" (Emphasis in MPEP itself)

More specifically, in response to the invocation of Official Notice, Applicant requests that the Examiner provide a properly combinable reference that would teach the claimed features in the environment of the present invention.

Moreover, it is submitted that Ho is not properly combinable with Shima, since the secondary reference Ho is intended for an environment that has no central controlling processor. Shima clearly uses peripheral device 230 as the central

controlling processor and would not, therefore, require or benefit from the technique of Ho in order to hunt for attached resources.

For the reasons stated above, the claimed invention is fully patentable over the cited references.

Further, the other prior art of record has been reviewed, but it too, even in combination with Akatsu, Ho, fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention.

III. FORMAL MATTERS AND CONCLUSION

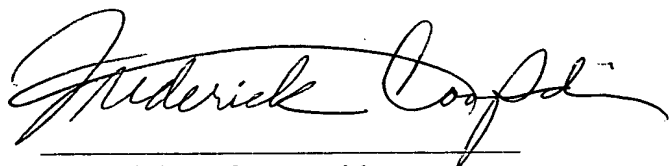
In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-20, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date: _____

3/1/04



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